



**May 11, 2022**

**Dear Chairman Pallone, Vice Chair McMorris Rodgers, and Members of the Energy and Commerce Committee:**

As South Asian Americans whose communities are disproportionately impacted by heart disease, we urge you to vote in favor of H.R. 3771, the South Asian Heart Health Awareness and Research Act of 2021 (“SAHHA”).

South Asians make up a quarter of the world's population, but nearly 60% of all heart disease cases<sup>1</sup>. In the United States, South Asian Americans are four times (4x) as likely to suffer from heart disease than the general public, experience heart disease nearly 10 years earlier than average, and mortality from heart disease is 40% higher<sup>2</sup>. This calamity devastates South Asian American families all over the country, and we urge you to take swift action so we can invest in critical research that will save lives.

Reintroduced by Representative Pramila Jayapal in June 2021, SAHHA first passed the House of Representatives in the 116th Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support and 55 cosponsors. H.R. 3771 would reverse deadly trends and mitigate the impact of heart disease for numerous afflicted communities in three critical ways:

- First, it will establish grants at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to encourage the creation of a public web portal with information on heart disease as it pertains to South Asian culture, including appropriate materials that can promote better heart health in these communities.
- Second, it will authorize grants at the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to conduct research on heart disease specific to South Asian communities and also promote a more holistic outlook on heart health nutrition.

- Third, this bill also encourages U.S. medical schools to include a specific focus on the health and diet of South Asian communities as a part of their regular nutrition curriculum.

These are positive steps in the right direction that will inevitably save lives. Nearly every adult knows someone in their primary circle that has suffered from heart disease, and by investing in research and awareness for at-risk communities, we improve outcomes not just for South Asians but all Americans.

We urge bipartisan support of H.R. 3771 in committee and on the House floor so we can save lives as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Indian American Impact

American Heart Association

<sup>1</sup> American College of Cardiology. South Asians and Cardiovascular Disease: The Hidden Threat. May 17, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Stanford Health Care. [Your Partner, or Ssathi, to Living a Heart Healthy Life](#). (n.d.)

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